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Letter dated 8 July 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 7 July 1998 addressed to you by Mr. Aytug Plumer, Representative of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (see annex).

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex would be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 61, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Volkan VURAL
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

ANNEX

Letter dated 7 July 1998 from Mr. Aytug Plumer addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to refer to the letters dated 23 and 29 June 1998 addressed to you by the Greek Cypriot representative at the United Nations which contain allegations on "violations of the airspace of the Republic" (A/52/966-S/1998/560 and A/52/972-S/1998/586, respectively).

I recall that similar allegations of so-called airspace violations were rejected in toto in our previous communications addressed to you, most recently in my letter dated 28 May 1998 (A/52/927-S/1998/445). Since the present allegations are no different than the preceding ones, they do not merit a detailed reply. I wish to reiterate, however, that flights within the sovereign airspace of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus take place with the full knowledge and consent of the appropriate authorities of the State over which the usurper Greek Cypriot regime in the south has no jurisdiction or nay right of say whatsoever.

These baseless charges put forward by the Greek Cypriot administration are aimed at diverting attention from its ongoing policy of escalation on the island. It will be recalled that on 16 June 1998 the Greek Cypriot administration brought the situation on the island to the threshold of a crisis by allowing the landing of Greek military aircraft at the newly constructed Paphos military airbase in South Cyprus. This is the first time that Greek military aircraft have been deployed in South Cyprus outside of a military exercise and, when viewed in conjunction with the planned deployment of the S-300 missile system and the construction of a naval base in South Cyprus, it constitutes a blatant effort by the Greek-Greek Cypriot front to alter the military balance on the island. It has long become clear that this is indeed the objective behind the "joint military doctrine" being implemented by the Greek Cypriot administration and Greece since 1993.

The remarks made by the President of Greece, Constantinos Stephanopoulos, during his four-day official visit to South Cyprus from 25 to 28 June 1998 to the effect that "Cyprus itself is Greece" (Greek Cypriot press of 26 June 1998) sheds light on the true political and military objectives of the Greek-Greek Cypriot front. Mr. Stephanopoulos made no secret of the fact that an important aspect of his visit to the island was "to examine the possibility of qualitative improvements" in the "joint military doctrine" being implemented between the Greek Cypriot administration and Greece (Greek Cypriot daily, Cyprus Mail, of 26 June 1998).

Meanwhile, in the Greek Cypriot daily Filelefttheros of 1 July 1998, it is reported that the Greek Cypriot leader, Mr. Glafcos Clerides, has urged the Greek Cypriot House of Representatives to proceed speedily with the enactment of necessary legislation to increase taxes in order to raise the contribution to the so-called "defence" fund. Mr. Clerides' sense of urgency about this matter is not surprising given the staggering proportions of the Greek Cypriot militarization programme. In this regard, in the 5 July 1998 edition of

Fileleftheros, it is reported that the Greek Defence Minister, Mr. Tsohatzopoulos, will be visiting South Cyprus on 20 July 1998 and will be bringing with him the message that Greece will extend substantial financial support for joint short-term military projects in South Cyprus. Reportedly, Mr. Tsohatzopoulos's priority at this juncture is the completion of the naval base being constructed in Zyghi, South Cyprus, for use by the Greek navy.

It is high time that all parties interested in a peaceful settlement of the Cyprus dispute urgently draw the attention of the Greek Cypriot side to the dangers inherent in its reckless policy of escalation and tension on the island. As a result of the inability of the Greek Cypriot side to come to terms with the realities on the island and its obsessive efforts to impose its political will at all costs, the prospects of a peaceful settlement in Cyprus are diminishing.

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 61, and of the Security Council.

Aytuğ Plumer
Representative
Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus